

26 July 2021

## SIGN UP FOR ARTISAN AGRICULTURE BUSINESS MENTOR PROGRAM

Whether you're a producer who is looking for support in marketing your product or service, increasing sales, or just seeking greater motivation and confidence, apply now to join Council's free Artisan Agriculture Business Mentor Program.

The program is open to artisan producers and growers from the Hepburn Shire and Central Highlands region. It is part of Council's Artisan Agriculture Project, and will run until December 2021.

Facilitated by the Small Business Mentoring Service, participants will receive one free facilitated mentoring session of up to 90 minutes.

Sessions are designed to work with producers and growers to increase their knowledge and provide mentoring on relevant subjects. Sessions are held with a mentor of your choice and matched to assist producers with their needs.

Support resources are also provided to businesses to assist them through these extreme times.

Program mentors can assist businesses with:

- Increasing marketing and business planning skills
- Helping business owners set objectives and direction
- Improving motivation and confidence
- Increasing sales and profits
- Bringing fresh thinking and identification of new opportunities
- Helping resolve time management issues.

Mayor, Cr Lesley Hewitt, said Council recognises that the agriculture sector is pivotal to the local economy and community.

"The Artisan Agriculture Project's Business Mentoring Program is another key initiative that will support agriculture and food producers within the shire," said Cr Hewitt.

"Programs like these provide valuable support and tools to ensure producers can grow and sustain their business, and increase access to local food," she said.

Carmel Masterson, Artisan Producer from Springmount Fine Foods, encouraged local producers to apply for the program.

"The free mentoring program is an opportunity for artisan producers and growers to increase business skills in key areas where gaps may exist," said Ms Masterson.

“Mentoring not only offers real, practical tailored advice from industry professionals, but it brings fresh eyes and new ideas to many areas of your business, which is always so important.”

For further information on how your business can access the program or to register visit [www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/artisan-business-mentoring](http://www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/artisan-business-mentoring).

For more information on the program contact Sharon Hebbard, Artisan Agriculture Facilitation Specialists, on 5321 6129 or [shebbard@hepburn.vic.gov.au](mailto:shebbard@hepburn.vic.gov.au).

- ENDS -